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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 6, 2002

1. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for November 6, 2002. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICS, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

2. COORDINATING GOVERNOR TO REPLACE OHAL GOVERNOR (Sabah) Following the 15-year state of emergency (OHAL) in the East and Southeast, which is to end on November 30 in Diyarbakir and Sirnak, the only provinces where OHAL remains in effect, the OHAL Governor's Office will be replaced by the Coordinator Governor's Office. During the Turkish National Security Council (MGK) meeting last month, Interior Ministry Muzaffer Ecemis briefed MGK members on his Ministry's "classified" report, along with a series of measures to be taken after OHAL ends in the region. The Coordinator Governor will reportedly have the same privilege of using special allocations from the Prime Ministry budget as the OHAL Governor.

3. NGO REPORT CALLS DIYARBAKIR RETURNEE KILLINGS "TERROR" (Evrensel) A report prepared by an Association for the Oppressed (MAZLUM-DER) about the killing of three returnees to Bismil's (Diyarbakir) Ugrak village by village guards called the incident not a blood feud, but "terror" by village guards which threatened the social peace. The delegation called for removal of obstacles in the way of village returns and abolition of the village guard system.

4. THREE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES INVESTIGATED FOR PARTICIPATION IN DEHAP RALLY (Evrensel) An investigation has been launched against three Diyarbakir public employees for participating in the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) rally and the inauguration of a DEHAP election office in Lice (Diyarbakir). The public employees have been suspended until the investigation is concluded.

5. DEHAP PETITIONS TO CANCEL VOTES IN TWO TOWNSHIPS (Evrensel) Claiming voters were forced to cast their votes openly in Sirnak's Beytussebap and Uludere townships, as well as many villages, the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP) petitioned the Provincial Election Board to cancel the elections (in those townships and villages). In addition, Youth Party (GP) Sirnak candidate Tahir Adiyaman claimed Ayvalik and Basaran villagers were forced to cast their votes openly and complained the Election Board refused to process objections to that end.

6. 103 ELECTION VIOLATION APPLICATIONS (Evrensel) One hundred and three people applied to the Crisis Desk formed by the Diyarbakir Chapter of the Human Rights Association (HRA), reporting rights violations during the November 3 elections. According to the Desk, observers serving at 17 different ballot boxes were prevented, while 37 people were arrested on election day for arguing with security forces. Alleged violations included forcing voters to vote openly, pressuring them to vote for another party (rather than the Democratic People's Party - DEHAP), preventing them from casting their votes, as well as threats and wrong electorate information cards.

7. MERSIN POLICE BRIEFED ON EU HARMONIZATION LAWS (Milliyet/Hurriyet/Turkiye) Chief Public Prosecutor Halil Acioglu briefed 500 police chiefs and police officers at the Mersin Security Directorate on EU Harmonization Laws. Police were informed about recent amendments to the Criminal Court Procedures Law (CMUK), the Police Duty and Authorization Law, the Meetings, Demonstrations and Marches Law, the State Security Court and Trial Procedures Laws, the Associations Law, as well as Regulations on Arrest, Detention and Testimony Taking.

18. NEW ADANA MP'S LOBBY TO POSTPONE ADANA AIRPORT'S CLOSURE (Milliyet/Hurriyet) Following a meeting with representatives of the Adana and Mersin industrial organizations, newly elected Justice and Development Party (AKP) and Republican People's Party (CHP) parliamentarians and provincial chairmen faxed a joint message to their headquarters to postpone the closure of the Adana Airport to flights until April 1, 2003. In addition to postponement of the Airport's closure, the message called for putting in service a secondary runway, and use of the Incirlik Air Base during the two-month renovation project. (Note: Several papers had already reported the closure of the Adana Airport to flights as of November 4 due to repair and maintenance.)
HOLTZ